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2 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: SSA-DD/S-PERS

SUBJECT : Comments on Proposed CS Notice re Overseas Assignment, Grades GS-8 and Below

1. As a new member of the DD/P family there are, no doubt, many facets to this problem of which we are unaware. We are, however, giving you the benefit of our reaction, as requested. The notice appears to be a deliberate approach to a most difficult problem, admitting, of course, that there may be no solution to many of the obstacles that basic human nature imposes in the path of an equitable administration of any type devised.

2. In selecting a candidate for an overseas assignment, we feel that the Panel should look first to the Headquarters Division for qualified candidates. The advantages of selecting an individual familiar with the Division and personnel at Headquarters are obvious; and when this can be woven into sound personnel management, the Agency as well as the individual will benefit. We offer this not necessarily as a policy to be so stated in the notice, but as a matter of practice to be adopted by the Panel.

3. It appears that paragraph 2 c is unnecessary. It is hoped that it is the policy of the Organization to render such consideration to returnees as a matter of course.

4. The requirement to submit reports to the CSPO every two weeks as expressed in paragraph 4 a(3) seems to create burdensome paperwork. There should be sufficient planning to permit a quarterly report to suffice and unexpected needs to be handled on a crash basis.

5. With reference to Principles for Directed Field Assignments, Group A, the exclusions are not all inclusive and it might be better to eliminate listing just the two obvious ones.

6. We suggest that further consideration be given to the proposed Procedures to be followed:

a. Asking for volunteers to accept a particular assignment degrades the importance of such an assignment and detracts from the emphasis that should be given to the qualifications and capabilities demanded by the assignment. If it is made a matter of policy to ask for volunteers, then the Agency's position vis-a-vis the employee is weakened if a directed assignment becomes necessary. An opportunity should be given each person, however, to list his area preferences for an overseas assignment.

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b. A crucial area which we have noted in the Procedures is the statement that "the Panel will inform eligibles of their selection for the job at hand." It is at this point that a clear delineation of responsibility be established between the Panel and the receiving Division's Personnel Officer.

Acknowledging the Panel's responsibility in the selection of the candidate and the determination of his availability, we strongly urge that the Division Personnel Officer be allowed to be the spokesman for the Panel, as well as his Division, in accepting the candidate to his new assignment and briefing him concerning his duties.

This in no way usurps the Panel's career management functions, but it does aid to establish a bond which is so necessary between employees and the Personnel Officer. It is at this initial meeting where the employee receives his first impression of the Division and the people with whom he'll work. It is here the rapport is established to foster the union of man with his employers. Anything short of this constitutes a failure in personnel relations.

It is the Division Personnel Officer who can appreciably explain the demands of the job and why the individual's qualifications and experience have earmarked him for the job. The emphasis on singling out the candidate will contribute to the dignity of the individual as well as the job.

7. The provision that an eligible employee may decline two such assignments without prejudice seems to be incompatible with the Agency Career Service Concept which states, "it will be my obligation to serve anywhere, at any time and for any kind of duty as determined by the needs of the Agency."

SIGNED

6 APR 1959

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Chief, Administrative Branch
DPD-DD/P

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